

CLAIMS:

1. A supervising system for surprising a plurality of image forming apparatuses, comprising:
 - a central control apparatus; and
 - a mobile computer selectively connected to one of the plurality of image forming apparatus with a wired or wireless interface, and configured to execute communications of the connected image forming apparatus of information with said central control apparatus via a network,
 - wherein said mobile computer includes:
 - an operation history information inputting device configured to input operation history request information; and
 - an operation history information informing device configured to inform the operation history request information to the central control apparatus; and
 - wherein said central control apparatus includes:
 - an operation history information storing device configured to store operation history information related to an operation executed by a service person for each of said plurality of image forming apparatuses, when the operation history information is received from each of the plurality of image forming apparatuses;
 - a reading device configured to read prescribed operation history information from said operation history information storing device when a request for the operation history information is received from said mobile computer and

an operation history information transmitting device configured to transmit the operation history request information to said mobile computer.

2. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said central control apparatus is located at a service center.

3. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a dispatch system configured to dispatch a service person to a user of a respective one of the plurality of image forming apparatus, and which is linked with the central control apparatus.

4. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mobile computer further includes:

an operation status information inputting device configured to input operation status information related to an operation status of the service person; and
an operation status information informing device configured to inform the operation status information to the central control apparatus.

5. The supervising system as claimed in claim 4, wherein said operation status information includes a security code configured to identify the mobile computer.

6. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mobile computer further includes:

a service manual information request inputting device configured to input service manual request information; and

a service manual information informing device configured to inform the service manual request information to the central control apparatus.

7. The supervising system as claimed in claim 6, wherein said central control apparatus further includes:

a service manual information storing device configured to store service manual information for each of the plurality of image forming apparatuses;

a reading device configured to read prescribed service manual information from said service manual information storing device when receiving a request for the prescribed service manual information from said mobile computer; and

a service manual information transmitting device configured to transmit the prescribed service manual information to said mobile computer.

8. The supervising system as claimed in claim 7, wherein said mobile computer further includes:

an image forming apparatus designating device configured to designate a prescribed image forming apparatus, which is to receive and print said service manual information from said central control apparatus, and said central control apparatus transmits said service manual information to said prescribed image forming apparatus.

9. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mobile computer further includes:

an operation result information inputting device configured to input operation result information; and

an operation result information informing device configured to inform the central control apparatus of the operation result information.

10. The supervising system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said mobile computer further includes:

a next user inquiry request information inputting device configured to input next user inquiry request information related to an inquiry of a next user to visit; and

a next user inquiry request information informing device configured to inform said central control apparatus of the next user inquiry request information.

11. The supervising system as claimed in claim 10, wherein said central control apparatus further includes:

an action schedule information storing device configured to store information related to an action schedule of each service person;

an action schedule information reading device configured to read prescribed action schedule information from the action schedule information storing device when receiving the next user inquiry request information from the mobile computer; and

an action schedule information transmitting device configured to transmit the prescribed action schedule information corresponding to the next user inquiry request information to the mobile computer.

12. A method of supervising a plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to a central control apparatus via a network, comprising the steps of:

inputting operation history request information of a respective one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses into a mobile computer;

informing the operation history request information to the central control apparatus;

storing in the central control apparatus operation information related to an operation executed by a service person for each of the plurality of image forming apparatuses when the operation information is received by the central control apparatus;

reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed operation history information from the stored operation information when a request for the operation history information is received from the mobile computer; and

transmitting the prescribed operation history information to the mobile computer.

13. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the step of locating the central control apparatus at a service center.

14. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the step of dispatching a service person to a user of a selected one of the plurality of image forming apparatus.

15. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the steps of: inputting operation status information related to an operation status of the service person into the mobile computer; and informing the operation status information to the central control apparatus.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15, further comprising the step of including a security code in the operation status information so as to identify the mobile computer to the central control apparatus.
17. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the steps of: inputting service manual request information into the mobile computer; and informing the service manual request information to the central control apparatus.
18. The method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising the steps of: storing in the central control apparatus service manual information for each of the plurality of image forming apparatus; reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed service manual information when a request for the prescribed service manual information is received from the mobile computer; and transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed service manual information to the mobile computer.
19. The method as claimed in claim 18, further comprising the steps of: designating a prescribed image forming apparatus, which is to receive and print the prescribed service manual information; and transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed service manual information to the prescribed image forming apparatus.
20. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the steps of:

inputting operation result information into the mobile computer; and
informing the central control apparatus of the operation result information.

21. The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising the steps of:
 - inputting into the mobile computer next user inquiry request information related to an inquiry of a next user to visit; and
 - informing the central control apparatus of the next user inquiry request information.
22. The method as claimed in claim 21, further comprising the steps of:
 - storing in the central control apparatus schedule information related to a schedule of each service person;
 - reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed schedule information when the next user inquiry request information is received from the mobile computer;
 - and
 - transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed schedule information corresponding to the next user inquiry request information to the mobile computer.
23. A system for supervising a plurality of image forming apparatus connected to a central control apparatus via a network, comprising:
 - means for inputting operation history request information of a respective one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses into a mobile computer;
 - means for informing the operation history request information to the central control apparatus;

means for storing in the central control apparatus operation information related to an operation executed by the service person for each of the plurality of image forming apparatuses when the operation information is received by the central control apparatus;

means for reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed operation history information from the stored operation information when a request for the operation history information is received from the mobile computer; and

means for transmitting the prescribed operation history information to the mobile computer.

24. The system as claimed in claim 23, further comprising means for dispatching a service person to a user of a selected one of the plurality of image forming apparatus.

25. The system as claimed in claim 23, further comprising:

means for inputting operation status information related to an operation status of the service person into the mobile computer; and

means for informing the operation status information to the central control apparatus.

26. The system as claimed in claim 25, further comprising means for including a security code in the operation status information so as to identify the mobile computer to the central control apparatus.

27. The system as claimed in claim 23, further comprising:

means for inputting service manual request information into the mobile computer; and

means for informing the service manual request information to the central control apparatus.

28. The system as claimed in claim 27, further comprising:

means for storing in the central control apparatus service manual information for each of the plurality of image forming apparatus;

means for reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed service manual information when a request for the prescribed service manual information is received from the mobile computer; and

means for transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed service manual information to the mobile computer.

29. The system as claimed in claim 28, further comprising:

means for designating a prescribed image forming apparatus, which is to receive and print the prescribed service manual information; and

means for transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed service manual information to the prescribed image forming apparatus.

30. The system as claimed in claim 23, further comprising:

means for inputting operation result information into the mobile computer; and

means for informing the central control apparatus of the operation result information.

31. The system as claimed in claim 23, further comprising:

means for inputting into the mobile computer next user inquiry request information related to an inquiry of a next user to visit; and

means for informing the central control apparatus of the next user inquiry request information.

32. The system as claimed in claim 31, further comprising:

means for storing in the central control apparatus schedule information related to a schedule of each service person;

means for reading, by the central control apparatus, prescribed schedule information when the next user inquiry request information is received from the mobile computer; and

means for transmitting, by the central control apparatus, the prescribed schedule information corresponding to the next user inquiry request information to the mobile computer.